

From: Cecily Wood
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/3/02 11:11am
Subject: MS Monopoly comment

I was appalled at the settlement for the regular suit, and for the settlement for those states that held out for more. The remedy is little more than a slap of Ann Lander's proverbial wet noodle. And, as Apple has rightly pointed out, the schools provision puts the fox solidly within the hen house. Microsoft engages in monopolistic practices. So we hand them a great opportunity to take over one of the few markets of its alternative in operating systems? I don't need a doctorate in electrical engineering or jurisprudence to see this lacks any common sense, nor does the punishment fit the crime.

Microsoft's disdain for any government remedy for its monopolistic tendencies was revealed at about the same time as the regular settlement was announced. They knocked all users except those using Microsoft browsers and email programs off their MSN.com internet provider service - which is generally paid for by users. A free subscription to the MSN ISP is often given for a limited time with new Windows machines, but after that free period, people have to pay to get the use.

Of course there was a great uproar and they were forced to back down, but the very fact that they'd pull such an egregious stunt at the very time they were to learn of their court penalties shows that they MUST be closely monitored.

Their new operating system doesn't show much of an improvement in the monopolistic tendencies although it's made some grudging hooks so different web browsers can be used. And it has grudgingly allowed PC makers the option to sell machines on which the Windows operating system is not installed.

And they say they will offer open systems? And they say they will follow/allow existing standards? That must be why the cell phone standards are being set by all except Microsoft which is offering its own? Unhuh, and I have a bridge to sell you.

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(Although my views are part and parcel of my job, they may not represent the school system's.)